

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY  
HISTORIC SITE SUMMARY SHEET

Survey #: P.G.# 72-9-22 Building Date: 1912

Building Name: John N. Francis House

Location: 5909 K Street, Fairmount Heights, Md.

Public/Residence/Occupied/Fair/Inaccessible

Description:

The John N. Francis House is a one-and-one-half-story flat-fronted frame dwelling, with a shallow shed roof sloping to the rear. The principal north facade is three bays wide. There is a one-story, hip-roof enclosed porch across the main north facade, with entrance in the third (westmost) bay. The original wood siding is covered with white asbestos shingle. Second-story windows in the north facade are 1/1 double hung sash, with trellis-type, vertical-board shutters painted black. The wood cornice on the north elevation is decorated with four molded console brackets. There is only one small opening in the second story of the west elevation, and one first-story window in east elevation. One brick stove chimney rises from southwest corner of roof.

Significance:

The John N. Francis House is representative of the modest vernacular dwellings built in urban communities in the early twentieth century. It was built in 1912 on a lot in the North Fairmount Heights subdivision. It was built for John Francis, who settled in Fairmount Heights in the early years of the subdivision, and worked as a foreman for the water company. The house is representative of the modest vernacular dwellings of the early twentieth century, popularly built on the narrow lots of growing urban communities like North Brentwood, Bowie and Fairmount Heights. The flat-front form is somewhat more unusual than the front-gabled form of similar floorplan.

Acreage: 2,475 square feet

**depository for survey records**

## 7. Description

Survey No. PG#72-9-22

### Condition

☐ excellent  
☐ good  
☒ fair

☐ deteriorated  
☐ ruins  
☐ unexposed

### Check one

☐ unaltered  
☒ altered

### Check one

☒ original site  
☐ moved      date of move \_\_\_\_\_

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

The John N. Francis House stands at 5909 K Street (originally Iowa Avenue). It was built in 1912 on lot 12, Block F of the North Fairmount Heights subdivision which was platted in 1910.

This is a one-and-one-half-story flat-fronted frame dwelling, with a shallow shed roof sloping to the rear. The principal north facade is three bays wide. There is a one-story, hip-roof enclosed porch across the main north facade, with entrance in the third (westmost) bay.

The original wood siding is covered with white asbestos shingle. Second-story windows in the north facade are 1/1 double hung sash, with trellis-type, vertical-board shutters painted black. The wood cornice on the north elevation is decorated with four molded console brackets. There is only one small opening in the second story of the west elevation, and one first-story window in east elevation. One brick stove chimney rises from southwest corner of roof.

## 8. Significance

Survey No. PG#72-9-22

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

**Specific dates** 1912 **Builder/Architect**

check: Applicable Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D  
and/or  
Applicable Exception: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Level of Significance: ☐ national ☐ state ☒ local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

The John N. Francis House is representative of the modest vernacular dwellings built in urban communities in the early twentieth century. It was built in 1912 on a lot in the North Fairmount Heights subdivision.

The Town of Fairmount Heights is located just outside the easternmost point of the District of Columbia in Prince George's County, Maryland; it is composed of a group of early twentieth-century subdivisions that form one of the earliest planned communities for blacks in the Washington, D. C., area. The community began with the Fairmount Heights subdivision in 1900, followed by five adjoining subdivisions, the last being Sylvan Vista platted in 1923. The Town was incorporated in 1935, and grew steadily through the years before World War II.

The land which was to become Fairmount Heights consisted, during the late nineteenth century, principally of parts of the small farms of John H. Wilson, John and Caroline Silence, Samuel Hoover, Mosby Brown and John Wiessner, all clustered around the east corner of the District of Columbia. In the early years of the twentieth century, these farms were bought up and subdivided by land speculators, who then began to sell individual lots to black families, most of whom worked in the District of Columbia.

The first section of Fairmount Heights was subdivided in 1900 by Robinson White and Allen Clark (both white men) out of parts of several small farms which they had purchased from the Wilson, Godfrey, Belt and Lee families. White and Clark had approximately fifty acres surveyed by County Surveyor Edward L. Latimer, and laid out in lots and streets radiating from the northeast boundary of the District of Columbia. The deep, narrow lots were generally 25 by 125 feet;

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
STATE HISTORIC SITES INVENTORY FORM  
Statement of Significance (continued)

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two of the streets were named for these first two developers. Sale of lots began almost immediately, and within a few years, dwellings were constructed and a community began to form.

In 1910, North Fairmount Heights, which consisted of approximately 15 acres of the John H. Wilson farm, was platted; this subdivision added eight more blocks of narrow, deep building lots on the north side of the growing community of Fairmount Heights, and was soon the scene of increased building activity.

From the beginning, blacks were encouraged to buy lots and settle in the new community. White and Clark sold the lots at relatively low prices, making home ownership finally attainable for black families. Most of the earliest purchasers of lots worked for government agencies; many built their own houses, or relied on friends and family to help with construction. Many families were quick to seize the opportunity to move out of the city, determined to progress, by hard work and amid healthful surroundings, toward a better life.

The earliest dwellings were of frame construction, modest in size and form, and many of these have not survived. Within a few years, however, several interesting and substantial houses were constructed for individuals who would make significant contributions to the development of Fairmount Heights.

The Francis House was built in 1912 for John Francis, who settled in Fairmount Heights in the early years of the subdivision, and worked as a foreman for the water company. The house is representative of the modest vernacular dwellings of the early twentieth century, popularly built on the narrow lots of growing urban communities like North Brentwood, Bowie and Fairmount Heights. The flat-front form is somewhat more unusual than the front-gabled form of similar floorplan.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. PG#72-9-22

P.G. Co. Records; P.G. Co Tax Assessment 1908-19; Federal Census  
P.G. Co. Dist. 13, 1910

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 2475 sq. ft.

Quadrangle name Washington East

TM 66, NFH BLK 1 F 24 lot 13  
Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A 

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Zone Easting Northing

B 

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Zone Easting Northing

C 

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D 

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E 

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F 

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G 

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H 

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Verbal boundary description and justification

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Susan G. Pearl, Research/Architectural Historian

Prince George's County

organization Historic Preservation Commission date June 1991

street & number c/o M-NCPPC, 4th floor CAB telephone 301-952-3521

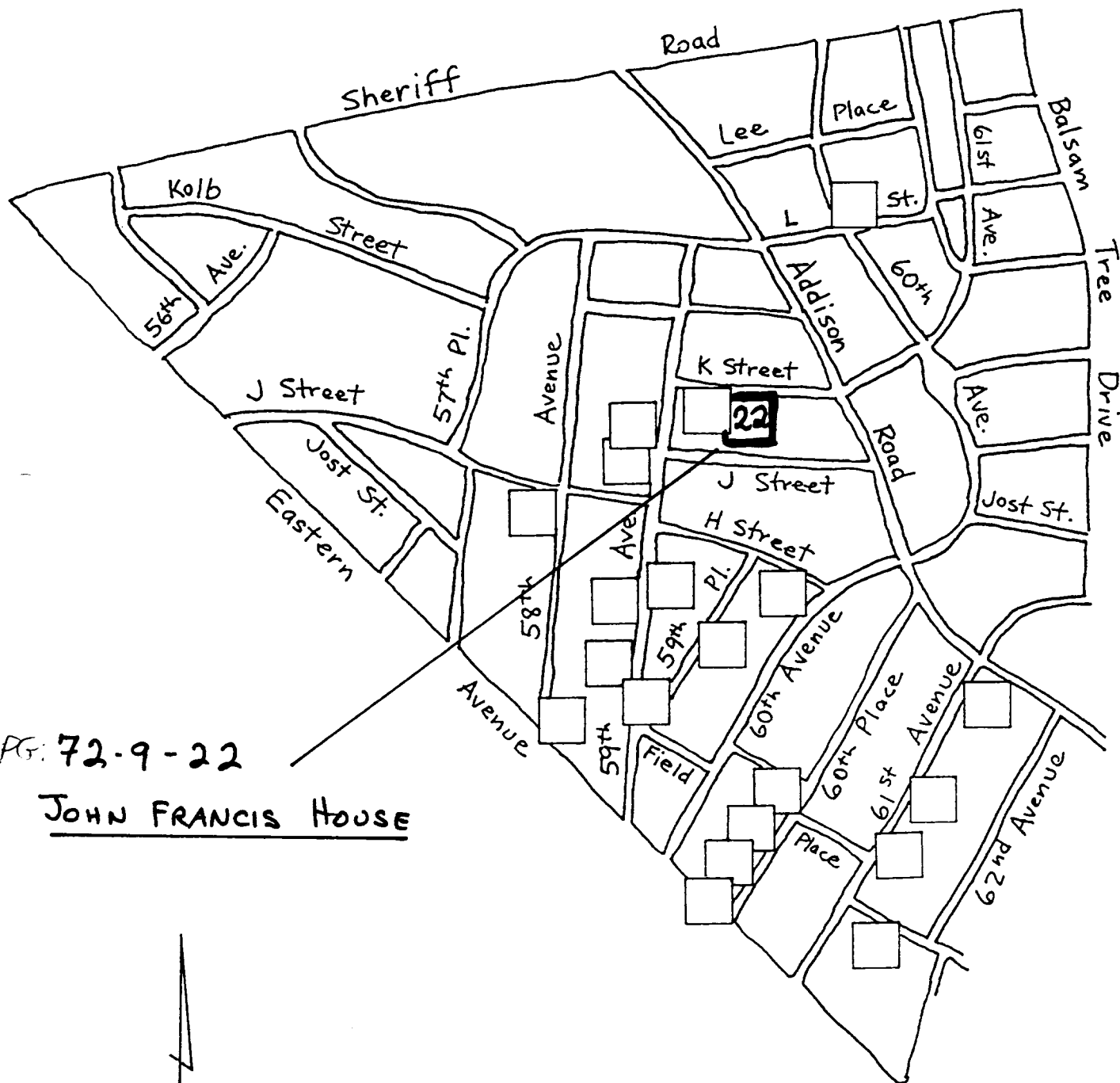
city or town Upper Marlboro state MD 20772

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

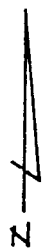
return to: Maryland Historical Trust  
Shaw House  
21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 269-2438

# Town of Fairmount Heights

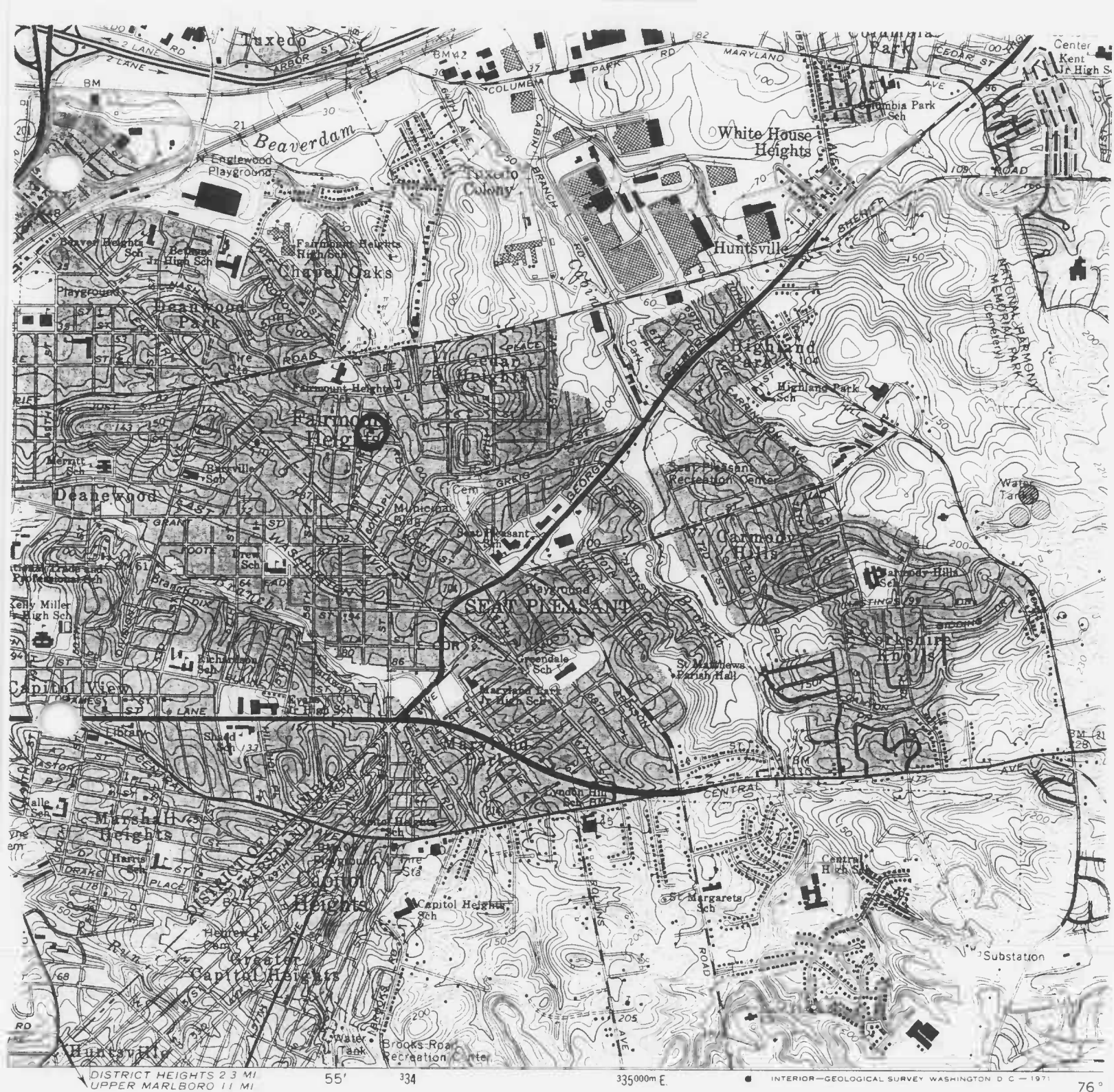


PG: 72-9-22

JOHN FRANCIS HOUSE



0 2000  
feet



0 FEET  
EVEL  
ATUM IS MEAN LOW WATER  
LINE OF MEAN HIGH WATER  
ATEI

ACCURACY STANDARDS  
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20242  
MBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

PG: 72-9-22  
**72-9-22**



QUADRANGLE LOCATION

#### ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Heavy-duty ——— Light-duty ———  
Medium-duty ——— Unimproved dirt ———  
○ Interstate Route ○ U. S. Route ○ State Route

WASHINGTON EAST, MD. - D. C.  
N3852 5—W7652 5/7.5

1965  
PHOTOREVISED 1971  
AMS 5661 IV NW—SERIES V833





PC #72-9-22

San Frances House (on right)

5909 K. Street, Sacramento Hgts

(NFH F-12) P.A. Co.

Susan N. Prall

April 1991

Northwest  $\frac{3}{4}$  section

7/8-1147